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## On The Shoulders of Giants By Ml. Saim Asif

From amongst the greatest of miracles which proves the veracity of the Dīn of Islām is the extent that it has been preserved for almost a millennium and a half. There is not a shadow of doubt that Allāh Ta'ālā Himself has preserved this Dīn, as He promised in His Book: "Indeed, we have revealed this remembrance (i.e., Qur'ān), and We shall surely preserve it" (Sūrah al-Hijr, Ayah 9). However, He- out of His Infinite Wisdom- chose the scholars of the Dīn as the means by which this preservation took place. These scholars preserved the Dīn in every single aspect, and just to name the different subjects that they developed to preserve the Dīn could fill a book by itself. Part of this preservation is that the lives of all those with any connection to the Dīn were preserved with meticulous detail- from the Sīrah of the beloved Prophet, ﷺ to the lives of the illustrious Sahābah RadhiAllāhu 'Anhum, to the pious Salaf, and then the lives of the 'Ulamā' who had any sort of impact up until our times. There is surely no other example in any other religion of such preservation of the lives of those personalities who had influence in that religion.

Thus, we have in front of us a treasure trove of biographies of the greatest people to live on the earth after the Prophets ('alayhimus salām)- yet another perk of being part of the greatest Ummah sent for mankind. The variety of these biographical works reflects the variety of the efforts that were made in the preservation of this Dīn.

Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah

(Rahimahullāh) writes: "The early scholars- as well as those that came after them- wrote many books regarding a specific category of 'Ulamā' as well as others (non-scholars), sharing either a common physical trait, or a common 'Ilmī occupation, or a common place, or some other common factor. As for those that shared a common 'Ilmī occupation, the 'Ulamā' have written separate biographical works chronicling the lives of: the Mufasssīrīn (exegetes), Qur'rā' (Oral Transmitters of the Qur'ān), Muhaddithīn (Hadīth scholars), trustworthy narrators (of Hadīth), the narrators who have been criticized, the judges, the Muftīs, the jurists (Fuqahā'), the 'Usūliyyīn (scholars of 'Usūl), the historians, the theologians (Mutakallimīn), the scholars of Arabic grammar, the linguists, the scholars of Arabic rhetoric (Balāghah), the writers (in Arabic Literature), the poets, the calligraphers, and others. The books written in this regard are so many that they cannot be counted.

As for those who share a common place, the 'Ulamā' have written regarding the history of different lands, and they wrote in the history of each land those personalities who were born and raised there, or those who moved and settled there, or even passed through there. In this regard, there are also an uncountable number of books.

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As for those who share a common physical trait, the 'Ulamā' have written regarding the blind, the one-eyed, the cross eyed, the hunchbacked, the lepers, the deaf, the lame (i.e., those who walk with a limp), the dark skinned, those who had broken teeth, those who lived long lives, the genius insane people ('Uqalā' al- Majānīn), those women who had multiple husbands (at different times), as well as other physical qualities which a group of people shared." (al- 'Ulamā' al 'Uzzāb pgs. 9- 10)

Allāh Ta'ālā – in His Infinite Wisdom- has created each of us differently, with each of us having different tastes and passions. With such a variety of biographies in front of us, each of us can dive into the biographies of those scholars we feel more connection to- whether it be because of the science they specialized in, or the place they were from, or for even because we share a physical trait with them so we can be uplifted and motivated. This aids us in fulfilling the command of Allāh Ta'ālā in the Qur'ān: "They are those whom Allāh has guided, so follow their guidance". (Sūrah al- 'An'ām, Āyah 90) Although, in context, the verse is referring to the Prophets ('alayhimus salām)- as they are the greatest of role models- we can also take it in a more general meaning to include all those pious 'Ulamā' who passed before us that we can take as role models, applying the famous principle of Tafsīr: "Al-'Ibrah bi 'Umūm al Lafdh, Lā Bi Khusūs al-Sabab" (Consideration is given to the generality of the wording, without limiting it to the specific context it was revealed in).

Below, I have listed a few benefits one can gain from reading the biographies of the 'Ulamā' of the past. This list is not exhaustive as, in reality, the benefits that can be gained from their lives are uncountable.

-Motivation:

Many times, we may want to make changes in

our lives, but one of the biggest obstacles will be a lack of motivation to make those changes. A big factor of this lack of motivation is usually the company we stay with: if those we are with are lazy and unmotivated, then this will inevitably affect our motivation as well. One of the best ways to combat this is to read the biographies of the 'Ulamā' and pious ascetics of the past. Imām al-Ghazālī (Rahimahullāh) says: "If you were to ask: If my nafs does not obey me with regard to Mujāhadah (exertion, spiritual restraint) and keeping punctual with my Awrād (daily recitations, Adhkār), then what is the way to cure it?

I would respond: The way you can cure it is to relate to it the stories which have been narrated regarding the virtues of those who used to exert themselves in the worship of Allāh (Mujtahidīn).

And from amongst the most beneficial means of cure (of the nafs) is to seek the company of a slave from amongst the slaves of Allah who exerts himself in worship, so that you can take note of his conditions, and follow in his footsteps. Some used to say: "Whenever I would have any lapse in my worship, I would look at Muhammad ibn Wāsi' (Rahimahullāh) and take note of his exertion in worship, and that would be enough to motivate me (for 'Ibādah) for an entire week".

However, this is a cure (for the soul) which has become well-nigh impossible to find, because those who exert themselves in worship like the predecessors used to have been lost in this day and age. Therefore, it is necessary to turn to listening in place of witnessing, for there is nothing more beneficial than listening to their conditions (Ahwāl), and reading their stories, and (reading) about their strenuous efforts that they made (in the worship of Allāh). Their exhaustion is now gone, but their reward and pleasure will last forever and will never perish. How great is their kingdom! And how severe will be the regret of the one who does not follow them in their ways! And so, he indulges himself with tainted pleasures for a few, insignificant days, until death overtakes him, and he is separated from his mun-

dane pleasures forever- May Allāh protect us from such an end!" ('Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn 9: 174- 175). Then Imām Ghazālī (Rahimahullāh) proceeded to narrate about thirty pages of astonishing stories of the copious worship of the great pious ascetics of the past, both men and women, in order to motivate the reader to emulate them in their ways.

From amongst the quotes Imām al- Ghāzālī (Rahimahullāh) mentions is the statement of Abu Muslim al-Khawlanī (Rahimahullāh)- a great Tābi'ī who is famous to have been miraculously saved by Allāh from a fire just like Ibrāhīm ('alayhis salām)- who used to say: "Do the companions of the Prophet ﷺ think that they have exclusive possession of it (connection to Allāh, high levels in Dīn, etc), and that we (the Tābi'īn) have been left out (from attaining it)! Never! By Allāh, we will compete with them in such a way that they will know that they have left true men behind them". ('Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn 9: 188). These motivational words give us a glimpse of the high aspirations of the Salaf- although they knew they couldn't reach the status of a Sahābi in terms of the companionship they had with the Prophet ﷺ, that did not stop them from competing with them in good actions. Our relationship with the 'Ulamā' of the past should be the same.

#### -Knowing Which Deeds are a Means of Salvation:

One common feature of the biographies written about our 'Ulamā' is that the authors also include dreams that their companions saw of them after they passed away, in which they ask them: "How has Allāh dealt with you?" (ما فعل الله بك؟) and they respond with the glad tidings that Allāh has forgiven them, and they mention the reason Allāh forgave them. Although dreams cannot be considered a proof for any matter in the Dīn, there are Ahādīth which indicate that such dreams can be considered as glad tidings for the believers. Interestingly, some 'Ulamā' have actually compiled entire books gathering such dreams mentioned in the bi-

ographies of the 'Ulamā', such as the book Mā fa'ala Allāhu bika? by Shaykhs 'Alī and Mahmūd al-Qar'ānī.

Some examples of deeds which were mentioned in these dreams to be a means of forgiveness in the hereafter: Imām Abu Mansūr al-Khayyānī (Rahimahullāh) was forgiven due to him teaching little children Surah al-Fātiḥah (Mā fa'ala Allāhu bika pg 183). Qādhī Abū 'Umar (Rahimahullāh) once dusted the dirt off the two sandals of Imām Abu Ishāq al-Harbī (Rahimahullāh), who made du'ā' for him to have honor in this life and the Hereafter. Abu 'Umar was seen after his death in a dream, and when asked how Allāh dealt with him, he replied: "He honored me in the dunyā and the ākhirah through the du'ā' of the pious man" (Ma fa'ala Allāhu bika pg 167).

As one 'ālim noted, it is rare for an 'ālim to be seen after his death in a dream and for him to inform that he was forgiven solely due to his knowledge, rather, most of the time some other reason will be mentioned, such as worship, helping people, etc. This is because 'Ilm normally comes with certain challenges (such as pride, arrogance, ostentation, showing off, etc.), and it is very difficult to overcome them. Imām Abū Hanīfah (Rahimahullāh) was seen once in a dream, in which he was asked how he fared in the Hereafter, to which he replied that Allāh forgave him. When asked if the reason for his forgiveness was his 'Ilm, he replied: "(That is) farfetched! 'Ilm has such conditions and challenges that very few can be saved by its virtue." (Jāmi' Bayān al-Ilm wa Fadhlīhī pg. 192) Thus, we should be motivated by these dreams to couple our 'Ilm with such actions which can be the means of our salvation in the Hereafter.

#### -Reviving Great Practices of Theirs:

'Ulamā' normally mention some special

practices that the Salaf would do or encourage others to act upon in their biographies. Sometimes, these may be great actions which are not common in today's time, and so we can start implementing them in our lives so that we can gain the virtue mentioned in the Hadīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ: "Whoever starts a good trend, he will receive its reward, and the reward of all those who act on it, without decreasing from their reward in any way..." (Muslim). Below are some examples of such actions:

'Urwah ibn Mas'ūd (Rahimahullāh) was once afflicted with gangrene in his leg, due to which it was amputated. Despite this, he did not leave his Wird (daily recitation of Qur'an/Dhikr) that same night! (Sifat al-Safwah 2: 49) Now let us ponder on our lives: we leave our daily Adhkār and Tilāwah for the most pettiest of excuses- that is, if we even have a habit of daily Dhikr and Tilāwah!

In another instance, 'Urwah ibn Mas'ūd (Rahimahullāh) saw a man praying, and then (afterwards) making a short du'ā'. 'Urwah said to him: "Don't you have any needs from your Lord Subhānahū wa ta'ālā? I ask Allah Tabāraka wa ta'ālā in my Salāh (for everything), even to the extent of asking for salt!" (Sifat al-Safwah 2: 50)

Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah (Rahimahullāh) said: "From amongst the ways to honor and respect Salāh is to come for Salāh before the 'Iqāmah is called". (Sifat al-Safwah 2: 139)

At this point it is important to note that when we read the biographies of the 'Ulamā', not every detail within them is meant for us to follow. For example, Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah (Rahimahullāh) compiled an entire book on the lives of those 'Ulamā' who remained celibate and did not marry due to their complete immersion in knowledge. His purpose in doing so was not to encourage students to never get married. Rather, he mentions that "By gathering these pages together,

and writing these words, I intended that our youth- who are currently neglectful and indifferent regarding knowledge and its attainment- should realize the value of knowledge to our forefathers, and their extreme attachment to it and their complete absorption in it, and their great sacrifices for its sake, preferring it over everything else, including companionship in life and natural urges. By this, they will know their virtue, and realize their true worth, and ascertain the value of knowledge to their predecessors. Thereby, their aspirations will compete with one another, and their ambitions will race to seek knowledge while they are frolicking in the companionship ('Uns) of marriage and its amenities, so that the descendants may revive the glorious feats of their forefathers, which will result in great benefit for humanity at large". (Al- 'Ulamā' al 'Uzzāb pg. 15)

We may see things in their biographies which may seem almost impossible for us to follow, but the important thing is that we learn from their zeal and use it as fuel to do whatever we can in our own capacities. This is also why it is important to have a senior 'Ālim whom we can return to and ask him about what we read- is it suitable for us to act upon in today's time and context? Additionally, some authors of biographical works- such as Hāfidh Ibn al-Jawzī (Rahimahullāh) in Sifah al-Safwah and Imam Al- Dhahabī (Rahimahullāh) in Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'- will comment on certain narrations of the Salaf and point out that this something which is not for us to follow them in.

-Following Their Guidance, and Building their Characteristics within us:

Imām Ibn Al- Jawzī (Rahimahullāh) said: "Whoever does not become intimately acquainted with the Salaf (pious predecessors), and the life of the Imām of the Madhab he follows, will not be able to follow their path. And it should be known that one's disposition (Ḥab') is (like) a thief- if it is left alone with the people of today, it will steal from their characteristics, and he will inevitably become like them. But if

he studies the biographies of the 'Ulamā' of the past, he will end up competing with them (in their good qualities) and will embody their noble characteristics." (Talbīs Iblīs pg. 107)

We can take one characteristic from the life of Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaṭī (Rahimahullāh) as an example, which is his humility (Tawādhū').

The habit of the 'Ulamā' at the time of the Salaf is that they would sit against a pillar of the Masjid, and the students would gather around him, and it would be known that such and such 'Ālim sits against this pillar. Al-A'mash (Rahimahullāh) narrates that "Ibrāhīm would work hard to stay away from fame, and he wouldn't lean against a pillar. So he would sit with some people, and if someone came, then he would move to make space for him, and if he was forced to sit against a pillar (due to lack of space in the gathering) he would stand (rather than sit against the pillar)". Al-A'mash (Rahimahullāh) also mentioned: "We made a lot of effort to convince Ibrāhīm to sit against a pillar, but he refused". Al-A'mash (Rahimahullāh) was asked: "What is the largest number of people you ever saw sitting with Ibrāhīm?" He replied: "Four or five". Note that this was not due to his lack of knowledge or virtue- he was considered the greatest Faqīh of Kūfah, which was a center of knowledge, at the time! Rather, it was due to his immense humility, and his fleeing away from fame. Ibrāhīm (Rahimahullāh) is reported to have said: "I spoke (regarding knowledge), but if I had any other choice, I would not speak. A time in which I am considered the Faqīh of Kūfah is indeed a terrible time". Al-A'mash narrates: "I was with Ibrāhīm while he was reciting Qur'ān from a Mushaf. Someone came and sought permission to enter, so Ibrāhīm covered the Mushaf (before he could come in and see it), and said: "So that he doesn't think that I'm reciting Qur'ān all the time". (Sifat al-Safwah 3: 55- 56)

Now let us ponder these incidents from the life of this great Imām from the Salaf, and compare it to our own selves: how much effort do we make to

please the creation, and earn their praise?

-Consolation:

The famous Arabic proverb states: "When a misfortune is widespread, it becomes less burdensome" (إِذَا عَمَتِ الْبَلَاءُ، خَفَّتْ). When we hear that we are not the only ones going through a particular difficulty, rather those before us also went through hardships- many times to a greater extent- it makes it easier for us to cope, and relieves the burden from our shoulders. This is one of the wisdoms behind many of the stories of the previous Prophets ('alayhim al salām) being mentioned in the Makkī Surahs of the Qur'ān: our Prophet ﷺ and the Sahābah (RadhiAllāhu 'anhum) were going through great trials and tribulations at the hands of the Quraish, so Allāh ta'ālā consoled them by mentioning the hardships that the previous Prophets also underwent for this Dīn, and how they prevailed and became successful in this life and the Hereafter. Similarly, in the stories of the hardships and sacrifices of our 'Ulamā', we can find solace, and are able to put our difficulties into perspective, and it helps us realize that many of our problems are "First-world problems" compared to the great difficulties the 'Ulamā' endured in the past.

An extremely beneficial work written in this regard is Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah's (Rahimahullāh) Safahāt min Sabr al- 'Ulamā' 'alā Shadā'id al- 'Ilm wa al-Tahsīl, in which the Shaykh gathers an array of stories from an extremely wide range of sources, so that we can realize the extent of the sacrifices of our 'Ulamā', respect them accordingly, and also find consolation in them regarding our own difficulties. Another book, Safahāt min 'Akhhār al-'Anbiyā' wal 'Awliyā' wal Hukamā' fi al-Sabr 'ala al-Zawjāt wal Hilm 'anhun, is very beneficial for those who are married- the author brings many stories which show that many of the 'Ulamā', and even the Prophets ('alayhim al salām) faced difficulties from their wives, but they remained patient with them, and it was a means of raising their status, and purifying their souls.



### -Softening the Heart:

Many times, we may find our hearts getting hardened while studying 'Ilm, especially when studying subjects which are not directly related to Qur'ān and Hadīth such as Arabic, 'Usūl, etc., and we find ourselves not tasting the sweetness of worship. One of the most beneficial cures for this is to read the stories of the pious. Imām Abū Hanīfah (Rahimahullāh) is reported to have said: "The stories of the 'Ulamā' and their noble characteristics are more beloved to me than an abundance of Fiqh, because they contain their character and mannerisms". (Jami' Bayān al-Ilm wa Fadhliḥ pg. 192) This is coming from one of the greatest Fuqahā' to have ever lived!

Imām Ibn al-Jawzī (Rahimahullāh) explains in more detail: "I believe that busying oneself with Fiqh and narrating Hadīth is not nearly enough to gain piety of the heart, except if they are coupled with Raqā'iq (heart softeners) and studying of the lives of the pious predecessors. As for mere knowledge of Halāl and Harām, then it does not play much of a role in softening the heart. The heart only softens by mentioning heart softening Ahādīth, and the stories of the pious predecessors, because they were aiming for the purpose of that which was narrated (not mere narration itself), and they departed from merely sufficing with the superficial forms of the actions which are commanded (by the Sharīah), and reached the level of tasting the true meaning and purpose behind them". (Sayd al-Khātir pg. 228)

### -Insightful Quotes:

The statements of the Salaf are filled to the brim with knowledge and wisdom, which is a direct result of their tireless pursuit of knowledge coupled with their piety, sincerity, and devotion to Allāh Ta'ālā. It is no surprise then that Allāh Ta'ālā caused gushes of wisdom to flow from their blessed mouths which have a profound effect on the hearts.

'Abdullāh ibn Al-Mubārak (Rahimahullāh) narrates

that Hamdūn ibn Ahmad (Rahimahullāh) was asked: "Why is it that the words of the Salaf have much more benefit than our words?" He replied: "Because they used to speak so that Islam can be honored, and so the souls could be saved (from the Hell fire), and to attain the Pleasure of Al-Rahmān. As for us, we speak for the honor of our own selves, and to seek the Dunyā, and the pleasure of the creation." (Hilyah al-'Awliyā' 10: 231).

Ziyād ibn Abī Sufyān (Rahimahullāh) said: "When speech comes from the heart, it enters the heart (of the listener), and when it comes from the tongue, it doesn't go past the ears" (Jami' Bayān al-Ilm wa Fadhliḥ pg. 278)

Imam Dhahabī (Rahimahullāh) quotes an unnamed scholar regarding 'Abdullāh ibn al-Mubārak (Rahimahullāh):

|                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| مررتُ بقبر ابن المبارك غُدوةً  | فأوسعني وعظماً وليس بناطق      |
| وقد كنتُ بالعلم الذي في جوانحي | غنيّاً، وبالشيب الذي في مفارقي |
| ولكن أرى الذكرى تنبّه عاقلاً   | إذا هي جاءت من رجال الحقائق    |

I passed by the grave of Abdullāh Ibn Al Mubārak one morning,

And it filled me with admonition, although it cannot speak

Even though I was already rich with the knowledge within my chest,

And with (experience as shown by) the white hairs in my head,

But I believe that a reminder can wake up an intelligent person

If it comes from men of realities (i.e. true Imān, Taqwā, Sifāt, etc.).

(Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā' 8: 420- 421)

A great benefit of perusing the biographies of our scholars is that their authors will commonly include

insightful quotations from them. Below are a few examples:

Imām Ibn al-Jawzī (Rahimahullāh) quotes Al-Hasan al-Basrī (Rahimahullāh) as saying: “O son of Ādam! You will not attain the reality of Īmān until you do not criticize people regarding a defect which you yourself have, and until you start to fix that defect within yourself. If you do so, then as soon as you fix one defect, you will find another defect within yourself which you have not fixed. If you do this, then you will become completely busy in fixing yourself, and the most beloved slaves of Allāh are those who are like this”. (Sifat al-Safwah 3: 156)

He quotes Muhammad Ibn Sirīn (Rahimahullāh) as saying: “It is form of oppression to your brother to only mention the worst that you know about him, and to hide the good that he has.” (Sifat al-Safwah 3: 164)

Additionally, he quotes Muwarriq al-‘Ajalī (Rahimahullāh) as saying: “The only example I have found for a believer is that of a man who is stranded at sea floating on a piece of wood, fervently making Du‘ā: “O my Rabb! O my Rabb”, so that Allāh may save him”. (Sifat al-Safwah 3: 167)

#### -Refreshing the Mind:

Allah Ta‘ālā has created the angels such that they do not become tired or bored from repeatedly doing the same actions over and over again, and thus they are able to tirelessly engage in the worship of Allāh Ta‘ālā. The nature of human beings, on the other hand, is that they become tired and bored when repeatedly doing something. Thus, when we feel tired, and need refreshment from studying all week, instead of refreshing ourselves by wasting time on our phones, or in other frivolous activities, we can refresh ourselves by reading the interesting accounts of the lives of the Salaf. Thus, we can refresh our minds, along with gaining all the other benefits mentioned above. Imam Ibn al-Jawzī (Rahimahullāh) writes: “The soul finds rest in listen-

ing to stories. Abū ‘Amr ibn al-‘Alā said: “It was said to an elderly man from (the tribe of) Bakr bin Wā’il who no longer felt desire for food, drink, or marital relations: “Wouldn’t you like to die?” He replied: “No.” He was asked: “So what is left for you from the pleasures of the Dunyā?” He replied: “Hearing about amazing stories and events.” (Al- Muntadham fī Tarīkh al-Mulūk wal ‘Umam 1: 117)

#### -Building Conviction in our Scholarly Tradition, and Knowing that One is on the Right Path:

Studying the lives of the Salaf and the ‘Akābir ‘Ulamā’ is a means for us to gain Basīrah (insight/conviction) in our method of practicing the Dīn, firstly, because it builds our faith that we are resting on the shoulders of giants, who left no stone unturned in preserving the Dīn, all while maintaining unmatched levels of spirituality. Secondly, it allows us to have a glimpse at their lives so we can see if we are truly walking in their footsteps or not. Many times, we hear people claiming that what they are doing is the “way of the Salaf”, or the “Tarīqah of the ‘Akābir”. Other times, we may hear our own teachers and elders exhorting us to follow the way of the ‘Ulamā’ who came before us and hold onto their rope. Without actually reading about their lives, how can we truly follow them? And how can we differentiate between valid claims of following these illustrious ‘Ulamā’ versus mere slogans with no reality behind them?

Finally, an important point to note is that it is also very beneficial to read the lives of those ‘Ulamā’ who lived in time periods close to ours, such as the Akābir of Deoband as well as others. Mufti Ebrāhīm Salejee (Hafidhahullāh) writes: “When we study the lives of people who lived not very long ago, the additional benefit we derive is that it makes us reflect that when he lived in about the same era as us and had done so much work, sacrificed so much and gave himself totally to the service of Allah Ta‘ālā

then why shouldn't we do the same?" (Hadhrat Moulanā Muhammad Qāsim Nānotwī: A Glimpse into His Life pg. iv)

Additionally, these 'Ulamā' faced many of the same issues as we do today, such as modernist, heretical ideas, opposition from non-Muslims, criticisms from other groups of Muslims, finding the Muslims in a state of confusion as power was wrested from their hands with no Khilāfah left in the world, as well as other issues which we currently face whose roots were planted in their time. When we look at their lives, we can see how they dealt with those issues, and the manner by which they dealt with those they differed with, and then apply it into our context with Hikmah while making slight adjustments where needed due to differing circumstances (without changing their core values).

The above were some spiritual benefits that can be gained from reading the biographies of the pious predecessors. There are also many 'Ilmī benefits that can be gained, which can be the subject of a future article, inshāAllāh.

I conclude with the Du'ā' of Shaykh 'Abdul Fattāh Abū Ghuddah (Rahimahullāh): "May Allāh grant the highest of rewards to the 'Ulamā' of the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ whose noble way of life, pious actions, beneficial knowledge, and profitable time (that they spent in the world) are the best example to follow, and the greatest motivation for those who seek to benefit, both in their lifetimes and after their deaths. Allāh alone is asked to shower them with a downpour of His Mercy and Pleasure, and to settle them in the highest rooms of Jannah, and to make it beloved to us to follow them in their righteous speech, actions, knowledge, and conduct." (Qīmat al-Zaman 'indal-'Ulamā' pg. 13)

# Knowledge and Wealth

Mufti Raza ul Haq Saheb

Allah Rabbul Izzat has granted the Ulama Ikraam great honour, respect and Reverence. Allah Rabbul Izzat has granted the Ulama a very high position.

A narration from Ibne Abbas Radhiallaahu Anhumaa has that a person enquired from him of the difference between Knowledge and Wealth.

Knowledge is that which is coupled and followed by actions. Mufti Sahib says that Ilm without practice is FILM.

Hazrat Ibne Abbas Radhiallaahu Anhumaa explained:

AllahTa'aala loves Knowledge that is followed by action. Sometimes wealth is loved by Allah Ta'aala and sometimes not. Qaaron's wealth is not loved by Allah Ta'aala and Uthmaan Gani Radhiallaahu Anhus wealth and Sulayman Allaihis Salaams wealth is loved by Allah.

Knowledge is the Inheritance of the Ambiya Allaihimus Salaam (Prophet's) whereas wealth is not the Prophet's Allaihimus Salaams's Inheritance. Qaaron, Fir'aun, Hamaan, Abu Jahal and Abu Lahab had also received wealth. Ilm followed by actions is the inheritance of the Ambiya Allaihimus Salaam. Therefore, the Ulama are known to be the inheritors of the Ambiya Allaihimus Salaam. The Ambiya did not leave Gold or Silver in their Inheritance

One will have to give an account of one's wealth not of one's knowledge. One will have to give an account of where they had earned from, how they had earned and where they had spent the wealth. One will not be expected to give an account of how, where and when they had acquired knowledge. They will not have to give an account of where they had taught, whether in England, South Africa or wherever. Knowledge is Virtuous. The reward for virtue done will be given in rewards.



One has to protect his wealth but Knowledge protects the possessor of it. Imam Gazali Rahmatullahi Allahi was traveling with a group of people when they were attacked, the robbers snatched his bag. He requested for his writings and works, they may take the coins. The bandit commented that it is strange that the knowledge is in the bag whereas it's supposed to be in the heart and learnt. Having learnt a lesson from the encounter, Imam Gazali Rahmatullaahi Allaihi thereafter took all Knowledge to memory, Ilm will look after you and you will look after Ilm.

The name of Ilm (Ulama) and the Actions performed by them will remain but wealth won't remain. A wealthy person's name will be remembered for the good he had done but not for his wealth and riches. The names regularly mentioned in the gatherings of the pious are that of Ilmy Knowledgeable people. We are grateful and indebted to them for their priceless efforts and contributions through their publications and writings. They did not engage in bribery or squander wealth. Fame is either acquired from a desire for it. Alternatively, Allah Ta'ala gives fame by announcing his happiness for a person in the heavens followed by an announcement on the ground by the angels amongst the people which results in Honour, Respect and Reverence for the person.

Regarding the person seeking fame, the poet says:

بہتمشور ہوتا جا رہا ہوں

میں خود سے دور ہوتا جا رہا ہوں

اور سن ہے

اب کو نیت ہو کر ہو کر لگتی

بہت مغرور حوالے جا رہا ہوں۔

The Knowledgeables are remembered but the Wealthy are forgotten unless it's someone very generous like Haatim Taai.

Knowledge increases from spreading but money becomes less from expenditure. The more you teach, the more it increases.

May Allah Rabbul Izzat grant the Ulama the Tawfeeq to teach.

## Music

By: Ebrahim Alauddeen

A vice that has become so prevalent in society today that some do not even realise it exists. This vice is that of the commonality of Music. It is difficult to find a place nowadays without Music. One doesn't necessarily need to go to a club to hear it, it is being played in restaurants, grocery shops, and in the homes of many people. We need to make these people aware of the dangers of such sins. Allah Ta'ala says in the Quraan "And of mankind is he who purchases idle talks (i.e. music, singing, etc.) to mislead (men) from the Path of Allaah without knowledge, and takes it (the Path of Allaah, the Verses of the Qur'aan) by way of mockery. For such there will be a humiliating torment (in the Hell-fire)." [Surah Luqman (Prophet Luqman) Verse 6. And regarding the above Ayat it has been mentioned "Ibn Masood (RA) said about this verse "I swear by the One other than Whom there is no God that it refers to singing [ghinaa].", he repeated this three times. Ibn Abbaas (RA) said it referred to 'singing and the like' while Jaabir (RA) is reported to view its meaning to signify singing and listening to songs. Many taabi'oon such as Mujaahid, Ikrimah, Mak-hool and Umar ibn Shu'ayb viewed it as a censure of music and song" And from the Ahadeeth it is mentioned that Nabi

(SAW) said: "A people of my Ummah will drink wine, calling it by other than its real name. Merriment will be made for them through the playing of musical instruments and the singing of female singers. Allaah will cleave the earth under them and turn others into apes and swine." Narration of Ibn Maajah

So we need to take it upon ourselves to inform the youth and the ummah at large of this sin which has become prevalent

May Allah save us all from this sin

## Rights of Parents

By Hamzah Kazi (3rd Year)

The importance that our Deen attaches towards the rights of ones parents cannot be over emphasised. Unfortunately modern day society does not allow us to do so. Majority of the youth show an immense amount of disrespect and this is becoming a norm. We are influenced by peer pressure. Our friends can be Muslims or non— Muslims, it does not mean that if they don't obey their parents we also mustn't! We have the Qur'aan with us. How fortunate are we not! The Noble Qur'aan has a solution for every matter and an answer to every problem.

Allah Ta'aala says in the Qur'aan in Surah Al-Israa:

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ

كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا ﴿٢٣﴾

Translation

'And your Lord has decreed that you worship not except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age [while] with you, say not to them [so much as], "uff," and do not

repel them but speak to them a noble word'.

Ibn Kathir رحمه الله says in his Tafsir: 'The Command to Worship الله Alone and to be Dutiful to One's Parents,

الله says, وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ, And your Lord has (decreed) that you worship none but Him. Allah Ta'aala commands us to worship Him alone, with no partner or associate. The word Qada (normally having the meaning of decree) here means "commanded".'

Mujahid Rahimahullah said that وَقَضَىٰ means 'enjoined'.

This is also how Hazrat Ubayy bin Ka'b, Ibn Mas'ud and Ad-Dahhak bin Muzahim Radhiallaahu Anhum recited the Ayah as: "And your Lord has enjoined that you worship none but Him."

The command of worshipping Allah is connected to the command of honouring one's parents.

الله then says: وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا 'And that you be dutiful to your parents'. Here He commands good treatment of parents, as He says in another verse of the Qur'aan:

أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ 'Give thanks to Me and to your parents. Unto Me is the final destination'.

Allah then says: إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ

'If one of them or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of disrespect, means, do not let them hear anything offensive from you, not even say "Uff!" which is the mildest word of disrespect.'

And today we don't only say the word UFF but we

raise our voices to our parents. The same mother carried us in her belly for nine months, the same mother leaves whatever she is doing to come and comfort us when she hears our cry, the same mother stays awake the entire night because of us crying.

Our father's too toil with so much of effort. They work endlessly; they also get tired at the end of the day. Who do they do it for? Do they do it for us so that when we grow up we can reprimand them and repel them and say things and treat them the way we like! Our parents use their money for us for the things we need, they make sure they get it for us no matter what the circumstances may be. We should learn to appreciate all the little things our parents do for us.

Allah then says: وَلَا تَنْهَرُهُمَا 'and do not reprimand them, means, do not do anything horrible to them.' Ata' bin Rabah Rahimahullah said that it meant, "Do not raise your hand against them."

When Allah Ta'aala forbids speaking and behaving in an obnoxious manner, He commands speaking and behaving in a good manner, so He says: وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا 'but address them in terms of honour', meaning gently, kindly, politely, and with respect and appreciation.

Then Allah further says: وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ 'And lower unto them the wing of submission and humility through mercy'. This means to be humble towards them in your actions.

وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمُهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّنِي صَغِيرًا

And say: "My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy as they did bring me up when I was young." This means, say this when they grow old and when they die.